

5

Star

Restoration Program



For all to share... for all to care.



"I would like to add my personal congratulations to the many voices cheering the Five-Star Grant award winners. They provide us all with a shining example of the New Environmentalism—one defined by widespread cooperation—that President Bush and I hope to foster"

—EPA Administrator
Christine Todd Whitman,
remarks at the National Association of
Counties 2001 Annual Conference,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



"I cannot express how much this program has benefited our students and our community. The young men and women who worked on this project have been shining examples of how hard work, determination, and cooperation can lend such a great benefit to the entire community. The Five Star grant we received acted as the catalyst to this project - a project that will continue and expand in the years to come."

— Diane Stulz
SEAS Program Manager
Worcester County, MD Public Schools

What is the Five-Star Restoration Program?

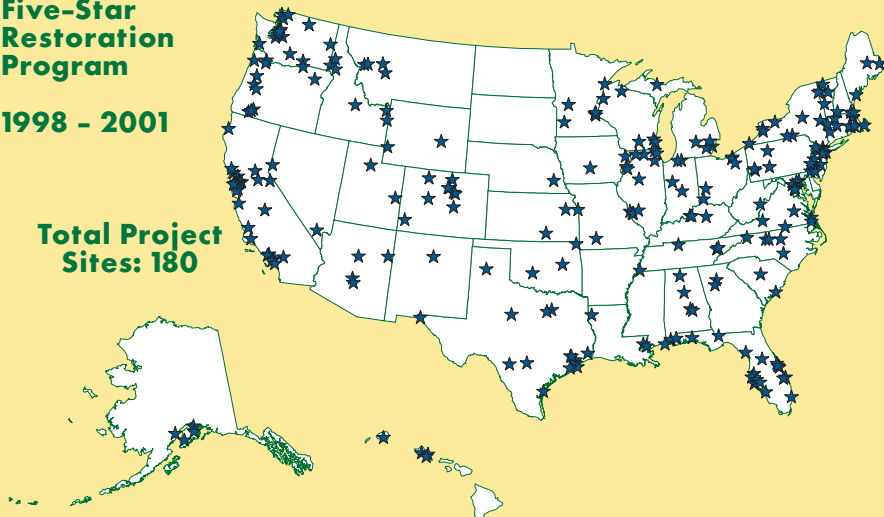
The Five-Star Restoration Program brings together citizen groups, corporations, students, landowners, youth conservation corps, and local, state, and federal government agencies to restore streambanks and wetlands across the country. It provides grants, technical support, and information exchange to help communities build strong partnerships that work together on restoration projects. Through education, outreach, training activities, and some old-fashioned hard work, communities learn to build diverse partnerships and foster local natural resource stewardship.

The primary funding for the program is provided by the Wetlands Division in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds and the National Marine Fisheries Service's Community-Based Restoration Program. They work with the National Association of Counties, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and the Wildlife Habitat Council to select projects and distribute funds.

Five-Star Restoration Program

1998 - 2001

Total Project Sites: 180



Facts about the Five-Star Program

- 180 Five Star projects selected from more than 750 applicants across the United States received funding
- Average grant award is \$10,000, with actual award amounts ranging from \$5,000 to \$20,000
- Project partners are diverse and nontraditional, and they generally include at least five (hence the Five-Star) participants from local governments, corporations and businesses, schools and youth groups, environmental and citizen organizations, and representatives of federal and state government agencies
- Project sites can be public land, such as parks, streams, and school campuses, or private land, such as corporate facilities

The Projects

Most Five-Star projects are part of community stewardship efforts. The projects provide opportunities for different segments of a community to work together, resulting in a sense of accomplishment and ownership. Projects achieve education, outreach, and community stewardship goals through on-the-ground projects that restore wetland, riparian, or coastal habitats. Program sponsors are encouraged to provide opportunities for students and at-risk youth to become involved in the welfare of their communities. Most projects are labor-intensive, such as eliminating invasive species, collecting and planting native seeds, or removing blockades for tidal flushing or fish pathways. When completed, projects are expected to show measurable ecological, educational, social, or economic benefits to the community. The Five-Star Program favors projects with ongoing monitoring and protection plans.

After a Five-Star project is completed, each partnership benefits from having worked together and shared a success. These kinds of grassroots efforts can make a significant difference in our landscape and make our communities look better and feel better.



"The natural and cultural resources located at Kohanaiki are vital to present and future generations....the Five-Star partnership brought together diverse interests and demonstrated that we can and must work together to build a sustainable future."

—J. Curtis Tyler III
Council Vice Chair, Hawaii County, Hawaii



"The restoration activities that we've completed under the Five Star Grant Program have educated and inspired hundreds of watershed residents and students in area schools. Landowners who live in the villages in the Galisteo Watershed are now equipped with the knowledge and information to take care of their land and prevent future runoff, soil erosion, and pollution of the Galisteo Creek."

— Jan-Willem Jansens
Executive Director
Earth Works Institute - Santa Fe, NM

Shooting Stars...

Projects Making a Difference *Kohanaiki Anchialine Pond Restoration*

Students, scientists, and community members joined forces to successfully improve a rare and valuable anchialine (brackish water) pond on the Kona Coast of Hawaii. Fifteen students from the West Hawaii Explorations Academy recruited by Kohanaiki 'Ohana, a local nonprofit organization, were the backbone of the restoration team. Other project partners included the County of Hawaii, scientists and teachers from the University of Hawaii Tropical Agriculture Department, and citizens from local community groups. Together they removed 90% of the invasive pickleweed plant from the pond.

In the second phase of the project, Academy students took part in a community education program. They created poster board displays for environmental fairs, wrote articles for school reports and the Kahanaiki 'Ohana newsletter, and gave presentations about the restoration project to students at local schools. The combined success of the restoration and the community education effort earned the project the Governor's "Keep Hawaii Beautiful" award.



The Five Stars

Each Five-Star project represents a partnership within the community where each party contributes to the final outcome of the project. A typical Five-Star Restoration Project includes at least five diverse partners, which can include school or youth groups; public, private, or corporate landowners; local, state, and federal government agencies; local community or environmental organizations; and universities or local companies. The partners all contribute in some way to the project, through funding, land, technical assistance, workforce support, or in-kind services. Most partnerships contribute more than \$40,000 for every \$10,000 in project grant money.

More important, the partnerships represent the vested interest of the community as a whole. When new partnerships form, lines of communication are created. Diverse groups working together have the opportunity to learn from each other's experiences. For this reason most Five-Star projects continue or even expand after the grant is exhausted.

Documented Results

(Based on 68 past projects from which results have been reported.)

Wetlands

- 46 projects
- \$443,000 in Five-Star grants
- 1,960 acres restored

River Corridors/Streams

- 26 projects
- \$275,000 in Five-Star grants
- Over 28 miles restored

Shooting Stars...

Projects Making a Difference Decatur Works, Alabama

With the help of organizations and volunteers from the Decatur community, BP created a 16-acre wetland inside the facility's 530-acre wildlife habitat area. The project was funded in part by a Five-Star grant for \$10,000. To complete the project, BP initially contributed an additional \$19,000. BP contributed an additional \$15,000 for enhancements in 2001. The community partnership worked together to restore the wetland and constructed nature trails to make the area accessible to the public. BP also built an environmental learning center, where students learn about the importance of preserving wetland plants and animals.

BP worked closely with its diverse partners throughout the duration of the project. The Natural Resources Conservation Service, Flint Creek Watershed Project, Tennessee Valley Authority, Morgan County Soil and Water Conservation District, and Wildlife Habitat Council all worked together to oversee creation of the wetland habitat. BP also worked with youth from the City of Decatur Youth Services Corps, inmates from the Alabama Department of Corrections, and students from the Julian Harris Elementary School to construct the nature trails.



"The Decatur Wetlands Enhancement Five Star Project demonstrates that we all benefit from working together in progressive, inclusive partnerships that focus on environmental improvement and education."

—Steve Elbert
Senior Vice President
BP, Decatur, Alabama



Opportunities to Participate as Project or Program Sponsors

"This Five Star project was designed to empower the youth with knowledge and confidence to help them make future personal and career choices. This wasn't just a summer job."

—Mary Wiggins
Union County Youth Programs,
Training and Employment Consortium,
La Grande, Oregon

The Five-Star Restoration Program provides a unique opportunity for foundations, corporations, and other interested groups to participate as project or program sponsors. Each year the program receives hundreds of applications. A panel of experts from the partnering organizations ranks the applications according to their environmental, educational, and socioeconomic merits. The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation maintains the ranked list of qualified applications seeking financial support and makes it available to any organization interested in lending support to community-based restoration initiatives.

For a contribution of as little as \$5,000, an organization can become a Five-Star project sponsor. On average, each dollar of sponsor funds is matched by four additional dollars in contributions provided by the local restoration partners in the form of funding, labor, materials, equipment, or in-kind services. Moreover, the program provides a great opportunity for corporate sponsors to engage their employees in volunteer projects in their communities. A bronze plaque placed at each site by EPA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) commemorates the project sponsors' contributions.

Corporations such as Lockheed Martin, Ford Motor Company, and Phillips Petroleum and several private foundations have become project sponsors. With a moderate contribution, they have helped communities improve open spaces, educate students, train youth, and build long-term partnerships that will sustain these initiatives.



The Program Partners

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation is the only congressionally mandated foundation that works toward the conservation of fish, wildlife, plants, and the habitat on which they depend. The Foundation is the managing partner of the Five-Star Program. Web site: www.nfwf.org.

National Association of Counties (NACo) is the only national organization that represents county governments in the United States. More than 2,000 counties representing more than 80 percent of the nation's population are members of NACo. NACo provides members with legislative, research, assistance, and public affairs services. Web site: www.naco.org.

The Wildlife Habitat Council (WHC) is a nonprofit, non-lobbying organization dedicated to increasing the quality and amount of wildlife habitat on corporate, private and public lands. WHC devotes its resources to building partnerships with corporations and conservation groups to create solutions that balance the demands of economic growth with the require-

ments of a healthy, biodiverse and sustainable environment. Web site: www.wildlifehc.org

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds believes local citizens play an important role in achieving a community's water quality goals. EPA provides technical and financial assistance and develops regulations and guidance to help communities to meet their watershed challenges. Web site: www.epa.gov/owow.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Fisheries Restoration Center manages the Community-based Restoration Program to provide funding for restoration projects that address important habitat issues concerning marine and anadromous fish, endangered species, and marine mammals in coastal communities. It has been a major federal partner provided funding for coastal projects. Web site: www.nmfs.noaa.gov/habitat/restoration.

For More Information



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